

***Preventing Punitive Violence in Japan:
A Pilot Study of Positive Discipline in Everyday Parenting***

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Positive Discipline in Everyday Parenting (PDEP; Durrant, 2012) is a parent education program founded on children's rights to protection from physical and emotional punishment. Developed through an academic-NGO (University of Manitoba and Save the Children) partnership, it teaches parents a framework for non-violent, non-punitive problem solving in situations of conflict with their children. This universal violence prevention program has been implemented and evaluated in several regions of the world. In Japan, physical and emotional punishments in the home are still legal and many parents still believe that they are effective means of teaching children. The United Nations has called for the worldwide elimination of such punishments through the implementation of programs that teach parents about positive discipline and children's rights.

To this end, PDEP was recently piloted in Japan with 3 parent groups in urban and rural areas. Each participant attended 8 weekly 2-hour sessions and a follow-up session, all led by trained PDEP facilitators. All of the 30 participants had children under the age of 18. They completed pre- and post-program questionnaires in the first and eighth sessions, respectively. The questionnaires examined changes in participants' approval of physical and emotional punishments; their assessment of the usefulness of PDEP to their parenting; and their perceived self-efficacy in using positive discipline in their daily interactions with their children. Among the majority of participants, approval of physical and emotional punishment declined; they viewed PDEP as very useful to improving their relationships with, and behaviour toward, their children; and their confidence in using positive discipline increased. The findings provide preliminary support for implementing PDEP on a larger scale in Japan.